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VIRGINS, VAMPS, AND VILLAINS: WOMEN IN THE BLOODY PULPS

By Leonard E. Hullar

**The Pirates of the
Prairies**
—OR—
FIGHTING FOR TEXAS

COWBOY SERIES



PIONEER NOVELS—Historic, Thrilling, Adventures

DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #255

COWBOY SERIES

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VIRGINS, VAMPS, AND VILLAINS: WOMEN IN THE BLOODY PULPS*

By Leonard E. Hullar

During last year's sessions devoted to "Dime Novels, Series Books, and Pulp Magazines" our discussion turned to women characters of the pulp magazines. At that time I agreed to present a paper at this meeting on the subject of women in the pulps and scribbled a note in my program regarding the title. Months later, after sending the title and abstract to Randy, the reality of writing a paper to match the title hit home so that I spent time collecting sources, reading, researching, and collecting still more sources. Finally, last month, after polishing the last pair of my daughter's shoes in the house and completing all the household chores on my wife's list, I realized that I could stall no longer. Out of excuses, I sat down to write this paper.

The problem revolved around the broad nature of the subject I had selected. There were hundreds of pulp magazine titles ranging in type from love, sports, detective and western to horror, adventure, science fiction, and hero. While women as lead characters were not as numerous as men, female leads were none-the-less plentiful. Furthermore, in those pulp page readers encountered a large number of women in supporting roles. Certainly, like most other pulp characters, the women of the bloody pulps were little more than stereotypes but a look at these fictional females should still be interesting and informative. The problem of the "pulp" is that, in fact, there were so many different types of pulps and such a tremendous variety of women characters that any generalizations I might make are, without a doubt, subject to numerous exceptions. With these thoughts in mind, I will, of course, make the generalizations anyway (along with examples) and then look at a few specific characters from some popular pulp magazines.

A year ago I made the decision that, for purposes of general discussion, we could divide women characters into three groups—virgins, vamps, and villains. While some rare exceptions might exist (perhaps in the pages of a pulp such as *Vice-Squad Detective*), if the woman checked in on the side of truth, justice, and America she must also be a virgin. Married women could be an exception but pulp magazines had little use for them as they were to be home with the babies. A young, single woman might be beautiful, intelligent, healthy, vital, and even sexy but never sexual. The villain sits at the opposite end of the scale from the "good girl" virgin. The woman villain in the pulps often carried strong sexual images and usually personified evil. These ladies plotted for wealth and power as did their male counterparts. A woman villain somehow seemed more ominous than a male in those pulp era days of public innocence. Finally, I have selected the vamp as a middle-ground or transitional type. The vamp runs from a virginal tease at one end of the spectrum to a villainous seductress at the other. As always, the middle ground is made up of interesting and complex characters. We still find few of these in the pages of the pulps for these were black and white—good versus evil—days with little room for subtlety or complexity.

In the pages of *The Spider* readers met the pulp heroine Nita Van Sloan. Nita shared the secret of Richard Wentworth's alter ego, the Spider, and assisted his crime fighting efforts whenever possible. She is des-

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cribed in the story "City of Flaming Shadows" (1934) as she and Wentworth arrive for opening night of a new play "...Nita of the clustering lustrous hair, Nita of the blue eyes of mystery. Her hand on his arm she smiled up into his face, red lips apart." Nita is an example of the good girl or virgin in the pulp pages. While she and Wentworth are obviously in love, they know that marriage is out of the question. Ms. Van Sloan remains an attractive plot device in the pages of *The Spider*.

In addition to their virginity, most "good girl" characters shared another common bond in the pages of the bloody pulps. They could expect to be captured, tortured, and sexually threatened (explicitly or implicitly depending on the particular pulp title). In *The Skipper* story "Breathless Island" (1937) the beautiful, young Tarna Rodens is tied to a giant turtle that is slowly moving out into a barracuda-filled lagoon. As the girl's ordeal is played out the author finds the opportunity to comment upon many features of the woman's anatomy. From another *Skipper* story "The Clipper Menace" (1937) we take the following scene:

"...he lifted the slender, doll-like figure of Marian Dawes. The girl was clad only in the thinnest of garments. Even her shoes and stockings had been removed...The thinly-clad body of the girl was laid across the cold, blue ice...Marian Dawes's slight, perfectly formed body became convulsed with her frenzied effort to escape the stinging chill of the ice cake. That pretty figure contracted visibly on the cold, blue slab of ice."

Sometimes the threat was more directly sexual as in the case of Beth LaSalle. From the pages of the serial "Hawk of Wilderness" (*Blue Book* 1935) comes the following scene. Young, beautiful Beth LaSalle (careful listeners will notice that I reversed these two adjectives so as not to be repetitious) has been kidnapped by a gang of mutinous pirates and carried off to the jungle. The leader, Mendez, is approaching her:

"For Beth LaSalle, the last veil of uncertainty as to her fate was torn aside...Beth was under no illusion as to his intent. She had long since decided that at the first opportunity she would attempt to escape in the wilderness...concluding that to be torn to pieces by wild beasts would be far preferable to what lay before her..."

Of course, like most of these endangered virgins, Beth can count on the male hero to rescue her from the villain's clutches. While Beth, and other women in the pulp magazines, could be competent and effective, they were more often decorative plot devices used as an opportunity for male heroics or to add a little "spice" to the story.

The virginal "good-girl" is more easily defined and identified than the vamp. Fortunately, the first pulp I pulled from my shelf provided me with a perfect example. The story is "The Gringo Who Wouldn't Die," by Walt Coburn, from the June, 1937, *Dime Western Magazine*. The vamp is described as follows:

"A thing of flame, Juana Contreras, men fought with knives and guns for her smiles. She teased them, led them on, laughed at them, danced with them, and slapped them if they became too unruly. She had, it was said, even used her thin-bladed pearl-handled dagger on one or two of the more persistent of the would-be lovers..."

As we might suspect the hero of this western adventure, a Texan named Tom Larkin, does not end up with the sultry Hispanic Juana (yes, there are racist as well as sexist undercurrents present in the pulps) but instead ends up with the much less interesting Anglo, Ellen Burch. The final paragraph of the story concludes with:

"They rode on together, without speaking, even when they had crossed the border and were on their way to the ranch. A wise girl, this young, blue-eyed, golden-hairie cowgirl. Someday she would make Tom Larkin the right sort of wife—a cowman's wife. For a cowpuncher needs a wife to love him who understands the golden value of silence..."

Certainly the vamps played a supportive role but "happily-ever-after" belonged to the good girls. As I stated earlier, the vamp lies somewhere between the virgin and the villain. She lacks both the moral purity of the virgin as well as the evil menace of the villain. Between the two extremes of black and white the vamp could provide an interesting shade of gray.

The lady villains were numerous and popular with pulp readers. A female villain could provide everything in the way of dastardly behavior that was available to her male counterpart and more. The "more" is a sexual component lacking where the typical male criminal mastermind is involved. While the male villain might torture or threaten a helpless female character, thus providing a rescue opportunity for the hero, the reader does not live the experience. The average pulp reader, except for the love pulps, was a young male who empathized with the male hero. Obviously the hero was left out of the sexual elements except to observe and/or rescue the "good girl." However, when the villain was a woman the reader, through the male hero, could be more directly brought into the sexual situations. The sexy seductress, with evil intentions, might tempt or torture the male lead or play the same role as a male villain in torturing a female character. In any event, the female as villain provided a variation on the sexual theme for pulp readers and my third "type" of woman to be found in the pulp magazines.

These women who played the villain roles were powerful pulp characters. Some names of these ladies fire the imagination. There was Erlika, the daughter of Satan from *Secret Agent X* (1938), Princess Dolores from *Operator 5* (1935), La of Opar from "The Return of Tarzan" (*New Story Magazine* 1913) and many, many more. I have selected the Silver Witch from the pages of *Jungle Stories* to serve as a representative example of the female villain. This magazine's male hero was the jungle lord Ki-Gor (who already had a "mate" by the name of Helene). Ki-Gor encountered the Silver Witch in two issues of *Jungle Stories* (1945 and 1953). She remained eternally youthful and beautiful by drinking a rare potion. In one story she has Ki-Gor imprisoned when the following scene takes place:

"...she was tight against him, her body warm against his skin, her perfume was a very exotic scent that crept unbidden into his mind. Her soft lips were close to his and her voice was the barest of sounds. Ki-Gor...tried to back away from the slender girl who pressed so closely, so provocatively against him...She kissed him with the hunger of a girl whose desire was all-consuming flame. For an ageless period that moment held; a spinning vortex of time where nothing existed but the warmth of their mouths and the quivering of the girl's body against his. But then Ki-Gor pushed free."

So, our hero's virtue remains intact and the Silver Witch eventually went the way of all good villains—her elixir failed her so that she died a horrible death.

Some might have difficulties with my distinction between a vamp-type character and a villain. In fact, the differences come down to degree and role. That is, the villain is much more evil and corrupt than the simply sexual vamp and the villain plays a much larger role in the story. The female villain plays opposite the male lead. She is a criminal mastermind, an evil genius, a jungle princess, or some other equally powerful figure.

As a type the woman as villain has remained popular among pulp fans until the present day.

The abstract of my paper, as printed in the program, promises some individual treatment of four particular women pulp characters. Women who, to a greater or lesser extent, began to break away from the simple stereotypes. While there are many fascinating female characters in the pages of pulp magazines, I selected Margo Lane, Nellie Gray, Pat Savage, and Rosabelle Newton for a little closer examination. Margo, I selected because she is probably one of the best known female characters due to her exposure on *The Shadow* radio program. Pat and Nellie I chose as long-time personal favorites. Rosabelle Newton was an obvious choice due to her unique qualities that we will discuss in a few minutes. A brief look at each of these pulp characters should provide us with a little more insight into the manner in which women were portrayed. We will start with Margo Lane.

The Shadow Magazine ran from 1931 to 1949 for a total of three hundred twenty-six issues. While Margo had been a staple feature of *The Shadow* radio program since 1937, she was not introduced into the magazine until June, 1941. In his masterful work, *THE DUENDE HISTORY OF THE SHADOW MAGAZINE*, Will Murray writes of Margo Lane:

"She was a typical 'dizzy dame' of the forties, and her impulsiveness was forever complicating The Shadow's plans, which he accepted with wry bemusement...Although Margo did enter the series as a snoop, Gibson slowly strengthened her role...In time, Margo usurped (Harry) Vincent's privileged position as the most active agent." (41-42)

In *The Shadow* adventure "House of Ghosts" (September, 1943) she is described as "...an attractive brunette, keen of eye and manner." Her entrance into the series created a storm of controversy among the readership who felt that the character was unnecessary at best and a nuisance at worst. In fact, *The Shadow* already had a very capable female assistant named Myra Reldon (Ming Dwan). However, Margo proved her staying power by providing *The Shadow* with a romantic interest and thus bringing to the magazine adventures a more human element. While Ms. Lane might be little more than the typical "good girl" virgin we discussed earlier, we must also keep in mind the comments of pulp historian Will Murray that in time she became "the most active agent." Without a doubt, she is one of the better role models we have encountered so far in our survey of women in the pulps.

Nellie Gray was introduced to readers of *The Avenger* in that magazine's second issue (October, 1939). She quickly becomes a full and equal member of the Avenger's crime fighting organization known as Justice, Inc. In "The Sky Walker" (November, 1939) Nellie is described as a:

"...figure looking dainty and fragile as a Dresden doll...She was just a shade over five feet in height and just a little over a hundred pounds in weight, and she was pink-and-white and helpless-appearing."

Readers quickly came to understand that appearances could be deceiving as we can tell from this description of Ms. Gray in action from "The Wilder Curse" (July, 1942):

"Nellie put up a fight that had to be seen to be believed. She threw the rear attacker over her bent shoulder as if he'd been a sack of meal...One or more of his buddies back of her crooked an arm around her neck...Her hand shot up, found just the right place over a main nerve in the forearm and pressed hard."

This woman is obviously a force to be reckoned with as an aide to Richard Henry Benson. Throughout the series, Nellie functions well as part of

Benson's team. At least as well as any pulp hero's assistant—most of them seemed to be in need of rescue more often than not. In any event, this little "Dresden doll" held her own in the pages of *The Avenger*.

Since reading my first DOC SAVAGE adventure, roughly twenty-five years ago, Doc has been my favorite pulp character. Soon after my introduction to the man of bronze, I encountered his cousin (young and beautiful, of course), Patricia Savage. Pat impressed me those many years past and remains my favorite female pulp character. She is strong of body, mind, and will. Pat functions independently in the world—a wealthy businesswoman in her own right—and when cornered pulls an old six gun from her purse to blaze away at the enemy. Readers were first introduced to Ms Savage in "The Brand of the Werewolf" (January, 1934) as follows:

"She had a wealth of bronze hair—hair very closely akin in hue to that of Doc Savage...She was tall; her form molded along lines that left nothing to be desired. Her features were perfect as though a magazine cover artist had designed them."

In action, Pat could certainly punish those foolish enough to cross her. We find a struggle with an opponent in "The Annihilist" (December, 1934):

"Pat knew the man with whom she fought was her master in physical strength, so instead of wrestling with him, she kicked his shins with the sharp toes of her slippers, hit him on the windpipe...and gave one of his ears a terrific twist."

She is a powerhouse. As with her cousin, Clark Savage, Jr., Pat is good looking, intelligent, and physically fit. Unlike Nellie Gray, she is never accepted as a member of Doc's crime-fighting team. Pat was not good at following "orders" and preferred blasting away with her old six-shooter with questions to follow. Volatile and independent, she worked best as a troubleshooter. Ms Savage is no cooperative, lady-like pulp presence. Instead, while some characteristics of the virginal "good girl" are present, Pat is about as far as the pulps could go in breaking away from the stereotypical woman.

Finally, we turn briefly to Rosabel Newton. Rosabel and her husband Josh entered the pages of *The Avenger* in November, 1939. Both characters played small supporting roles as Avenger aides but are important simply by existing in any capacity. Josh and Rosabel were a rarity in hero pulp pages—a happily married, college-educated, black couple. Rosabel was described as "a slenderly rounded Negress with intelligent, liquid eyes." ("The Sky Walker" November, 1939) In action this Avenger aide proved to be an effective assistant:

"Rosabel rose up beside the stairs, where the banisters had hidden her. She had a vase in her tapering, competent hand. The vase broke over this ...man's head..." ("The Sky Walker")

Anyone familiar with *The Avenger* knows that Rosabel Newton played a small role in the series. Often times she was reduced to posing as Nellie Gray's maid or playing some other servant-like part. However, the presence of a college educated, married, black woman in a popular fiction magazine of the 1930s and 40s is a significant departure from stereotyping in and of itself.

To state that pulp women rarely moved beyond a few common types is a simple fact. That these types were created by males, for the most part, and reflect a sexual bias is equally true. Of course, the pulp magazines were filled with stereotypes—sexual, racial, ethnic, and others. I hope that this brief look at women in the bloody pulps has illustrated both how

women were typically portrayed in these magazines as well as some leading exceptions to the rule. I cannot help but credit characters such as Pat, Nellie, and Rosabel with playing a part in opening my mind beyond the biases and prejudices of the small southern city where I grew up. Over the years, I came to understand that all women weren't virgins, vamps, or villains.

AN INFORMAL NOTE ON SOURCES

The primary source materials for this paper are to be found in the pages of numerous pulp magazines (and paperback reprints) that I have read over a period of some 25 years of interest in the pulps. Specific pulp magazines are cited in the text of the paper. As an active pulp enthusiast, I have also read numerous fan publications over the years that contributed to my overall knowledge and understanding of the pulps in general as well as the specific topic of this paper. Some publications such as *Nemesid* (*Doc Savage Club Reader*), *Pulp*, and *Xenophile* are no longer with us. Others are still very active including *Golden Perils* (Howard Hopkins, 5 Milliken Mills Rd., Scarboro, ME 04074), *Pulp Vault* (Doug Ellis, Tattered Pages Press, 6942 N. Oleander, Chicago, IL 60631), *Echoes* (Tom Johnson, 504 E. Morris St., Seymour, TX 76380), and *The Pulp Collector* (John P. Gunnison, 8417 Carrollton Pkwy., New Carrollton, MD 20784). I would suggest that a self-addressed, stamped envelope be sent along with all enquiries. Especially useful in preparing this paper on women in the pulp magazines were special issues of fan publications devoted to this subject including *Doc Savage Club Reader* #11 (particularly "The Silver Witch," by Nick Carr and Tom Johnson) and *Golden Perils* #16. General works related to the pulps and individual pulp characters include: *AMERICA'S SECRET SERVICE ACE*, by Nick Carr (Robert Weinberg, 1974); *GANGLAND'S DOOM*, by Frank Eisgruber, Jr. (Robert Weinberg, 1974); *THE MAN BEHIND DOC SAVAGE*, edited by Robert Weinberg (Weinberg, 1974); *THE FLYING SPY*, by Nick Carr (Weinberg, 1978); *SECRET AGENT X: A HISTORY*, by Tom Johnson and Will Murray (Weinberg, 1980); *THE BLACK BAT*, by Tom Johnson (Golden Perils Press, Fading Shadows, Inc., 1989); *AMAZING PULP HEROES*, by Frank Hamilton and Link Hullar (Gryphon, 1988); *FAVORITES*, by Link Hullar and Frank Hamilton (Tattered Pages Press, 1989); *SPIDER*, by Robert Sampson (Popular Press, 1987); *THE NIGHT MASTER*, by Robert Sampson (Pulp Press, Weinberg, 1982); *DOC SAVAGE: HIS APOCALYPTIC LIFE*, by Philip Jose Farmer (Doubleday, 1973); *THE WESTERN PULP HERO*, by Nick Carr (Starmount, 1989); *MYSTERY, DETECTIVE, AND ESPIONAGE MAGAZINES*, by Michael L. Cook (Greenwood Press, 1983); *YES-TERDAY'S FACES*, Volumes 1-4, by Robert Sampson (Popular Press, 1983-1987, with at least one more volume to follow); *THE PULP JUNGLE*, by Frank Gruber (Sherbourne Press, 1967); *THE DUENDE HISTORY OF THE SHADOW MAGAZINE*, by Will Murray (Odyssey Publications, 1980); *THE SHADOW SCRAPBOOK*, by Walter B. Gibson (Harcourt, Brace, Javonovich, 1979); and *HERO PULP INDEX*, by Robert Weinberg with Lori McKinstry (Opar Press, 1971). An important series of booklets by Will Murray has been published by Odyssey Publications, including: *DOC SAVAGE: REFLECTIONS IN BRONZE* (1978); *THE DOC SAVAGE FILES* (1986); *DOC SAVAGE—SUPREME ADVENTURER* (1980); and *SECRETS OF DOC SAVAGE* (1981). Two significant contributions to pulp research are Will Murray's *DUENDE* #1 & #2 (both out of print). Important articles are in previously mentioned pulp fan publications. Small press editors and publishers form the backbone of the pulp community and should not be ignored by those interested in pulp magazines. Without doubt other books, booklets, articles, and fan publications relating to pulp magazines are available. I have provided a representative sampling to assist the newcomer in finding information on the glorious "bloody" pulps.

DEFEATING THE DASTARDLY DONS WITH DIME NOVELS; OR, AIDING OLD GLORY IN CUBA, 1898-1902

By E. M. Sanchez-Saavedra

"McKinley called for volunteers,
And then I got my gun;
First Spaniard I saw coming,
I dropped that gun and run.
It was all about that
Battleship of Maine."

"Why are you running,
Are you afraid to die?
The reason that I'm running
Is because I cannot fly!
It was all about that
Battleship of Maine."

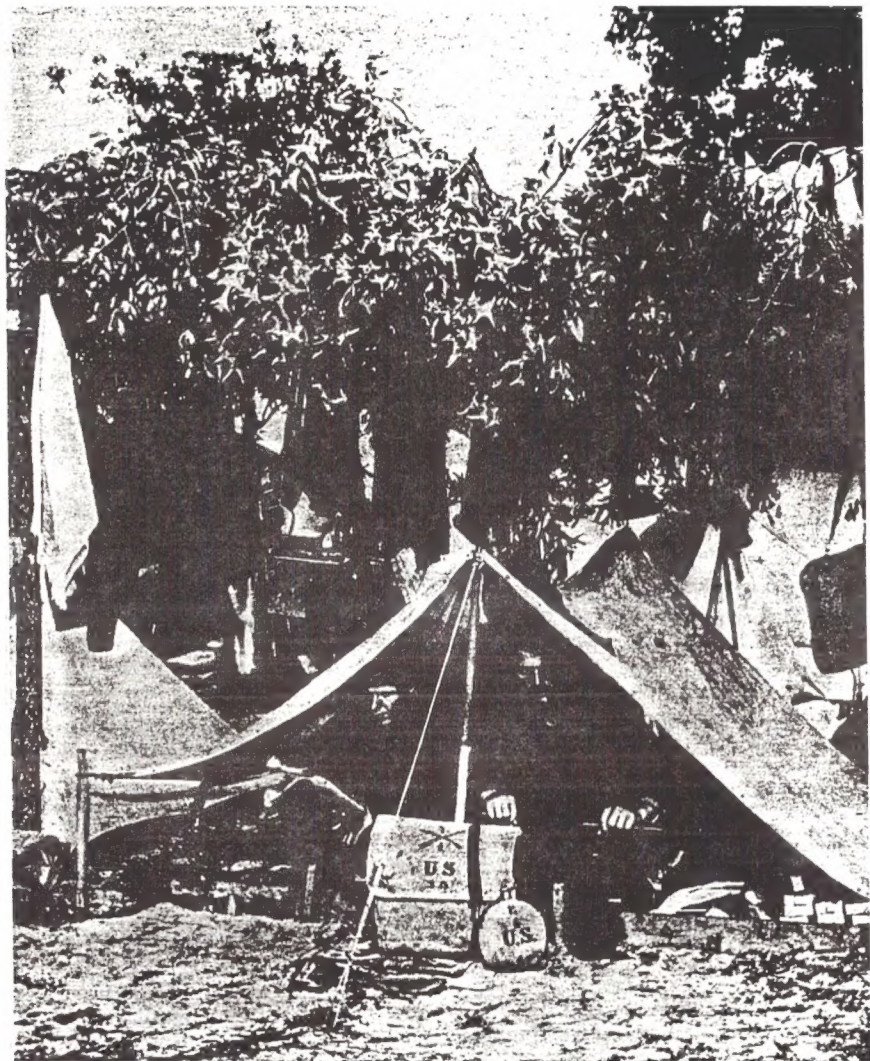
In the innocent days before the Somme, Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Saigon, when the horrors of Antietam, Gettysburg and Andersonville had mellowed into a bright nostalgia, armed conflict provided the stuff of glorious daydreams for a generation never exposed to it. Alexander Gardiner's gruesome and messy battlefield photographs were buried in dusty storage, while the schoolbooks were illustrated with tidy steel engravings of glorious deeds on the fields of Mars. When the United States declared war on Spain in April, 1898, there was no CBS Nightly News to horrify Americans with color film of their young men stepping on Claymore mines. The ebullient atmosphere was much closer to 1991's "Operation Desert Storm."

To young men slogging through Cuban and Philippine jungles wearing winter woollen uniforms, dropping from fevers and Mauser rounds, or the "Jackies" frying below decks in Santiago Harbor, the "splendid little war" soon lost its glamour. Folks at home, opening their *Harper's Weekly* or *Collier's* once a week, received the same impression of romantic tidiness that their parents had had in the 1860s. On the home front, it was a war of images, perhaps the first in history. There were Teddy Roosevelt, all teeth and specs, and his rugged Rough Riders, quick and decisive naval victories at Manila and Santiago, Hobson's futile heroism, the "message to Garcia," General Shafter on his sagging buckboard, the disorganized and dismounted charge up San Juan Hill, Walter Reed and William Gorgas, nobly combating tropical diseases, and a galaxy of other icons. "To hell with the Yankees. Dammit! I mean the Spaniards!" roared old ex-Confederate "Fighting Joe" Wheeler, in the heat of battle. The public at home loved it.

The war itself lasted a scant four months. Newfangled khaki summer uniforms finally reached the troops after the August 12th Peace Protocol, and they shivered out demobilization in chilly places like Long Island. (Only the troops who experienced jungle guerrilla warfare for the next two years in the Philippines derived any benefit from the new clothing. Regular army units were armed with the Krag-Jorgensen magazine rifle. The volunteers in Cuba had opposed Mauser bolt-action rifles with clumsy, single-shot "trapdoor" Springfield .45/70 of Indian wars vintage.)

Colorful and irresponsible propaganda inflamed America's war fever and fanned it throughout the brief and needless conflict. William Randolph Hearst's newspapers manufactured sensational atrocities and magnified trivial incidents. In a feat worthy of Frank Merriwell, Karl Decker, a Hearst reporter, rescued the "Cuban Girl Martyr," Evangelina Cisneros, from a Havana prison (although, unlike the modest dime novel hero, he ballyhooed his exploit for all it was worth).

Dime novels, which had for the most part evolved into nickel weeklies by 1898, played an unsuspected part in boosting morale on the home front and in the field. The sporadic Cuban uprisings after 1871 had occasionally figured in Beadle's publications, including those written by a participant, the soldier-of-fortune Col. Prentiss Ingraham. Even Frank Tousey's continuations of the old JACK HARKAWAY series included two epi-



sodes in the 1897 war. When the U.S.S. Maine exploded and sank in Havana Harbor in February, 1898, Norman Munro's "Old Cap. Collier" was on the job, "piping" the mystery. Frank Tousey dispatched "Yankee Doodle" of the army and "Young Glory" of the navy to avenge the deed, while Street and Smith's bright young writer, Upton Sinclair, sent "Hal Maynard" and "Clif Farraday" to reinforce them. Even "Fred Fearnot" became involved in a civilian capacity.

These offerings, and many others, including Tousey's full-color *Illustrated War News*, obviously boosted civilian morale. Oddly enough,

Tip Top Weekly's "Frank Merriwell" had the greatest influence on the fighting servicemen, although Frank was too busy recouping his lost fortune to have anything to do with the war. As Beadle and Adams had realized in 1861, the last thing a fighting man wants to relax with is a novel about the war he is trying to forget for a while. Although thousands of nickel weeklies were shipped to the training camps and field hospitals in 1898, *Tip Top Weekly* seems to have been the general favorite.

In 1898, Edward Stratemeyer was busily trying to divorce himself from his past career as a dime novelist. His OLD GLORY series, which capitalized on Dewey's victory, was about to put him squarely between respectable hard covers. In the third volume, FIGHTING IN CUBAN WATERS, he could not resist inserting a little antidime novel propaganda. His hero, Walter Russell, after a series of improbable adventures in Cuba, is back on the U.S.S. Brooklyn off Santiago, and is "debriefed" by Commodore Winfield Scott Schley.

Afterwards, Walter's messmates ask foolish questions like, "Did the Commodore slap you on the back and call you a bully boy?"

Walter, the epitome of series-book virtue, replies:

"I guess you've been reading some dime and half-dime colored-cover novels...I imagine that is the way they do in such books."

"That's it. Why, I've got a story about 'Dewey's Boy Bodyguard.' The hero in that overheard a plot against Dewey, and Dewey clasped him to his breast and made him a Captain of Marines."

"Indeed! And you believe such a yarn?"

"Dewey couldn't make the boy a Captain of Marines, not if he was an admiral twice over...Those yarns are pure trash...You had better study some good book on gunnery, and try to become a gun captain."

"I'll burn the whole batch of colored stuff up," cries the apprentice; and he did, at the big galley fire. No one on board ever caught him reading dime and half dime novels again.

So far, so good in this charming little morality tale. Later on in the book, reality caught up with reform: after a dull, interminable stretch of blockade duty, reading matter was scarce. Scraps of newspaper were saved and traded and the bored sailors collared Walter's disciple and "tossed [him] up in a canvas hammock for having burnt the penny-dreadfuls previously mentioned."

After examining a number of *Tip Top* Weeklies for the war period and slightly afterwards, this sequel to Stratemeyer's parable is confirmed. In number 142, December 31, 1898, *Tip Top's* "Applause" column printed a letter from A. F. M'Hardy, a patient at the U.S. Naval Hospital, Brooklyn:

"I would greatly like to see Frank regain his fortune and return to Yale...and before long to marry Inza, who is my great girl favorite. She is a true model of the American girl, and she is a great favorite among the other boys in the navy who read your publication, and who, by the way, are a great many, even the old tars who have spent a life time in the navy, love to read your great weekly, and think Inza the true girl for Frank... I am at present suffering from fever contracted aboard the ship Texas while in Cuban waters in our late war...and will soon leave the service in order to return to college and finish my education..."

In the same issue, George A. Wilkins, Company G, Eighth Massachusetts Infantry, U.S. Volunteers, Camp Hamilton, Lexington, Ky., observed that "if the young men of to-day would pattern after Frank Merriwell...the world would be better off for so doing."

Ned M'Cune, Company H, Fifth Pennsylvania Volunteers, reported that

he received *Tip Top Weekly* every week while in camp at Chickamauga. "Long live Frank and Elsie." (Number 144, January 14, 1899)

In Number 151, March 4, 1899, Corporal W. H. Gleason, Company C, Eighth Massachusetts Infantry, camped in Americus, Ga., wrote that "Your valuable weekly seems to receive applause from all quarters...My tent's crew and all of our company take the greatest pleasure in reading it, and its presence at the hospitals has done much to cheer up the sick and convalescents. We always look forward to the arrival of the latest issue. Frank would have made a good soldier."

Elmo T. Heller's letter appeared in Number 153, March 18, 1899: "I have read the *Tip Top* ever since it has been published, with the exception of about ten numbers, which I missed while in Chickamauga Park with the second Nebraska Volunteers. Some friends of mine sent them to me part of the time while there, and I enjoyed it far more than anything else they could have sent me. There is no newsdealer here in Dewitt [Nebraska], but I have one of the newsboys send and get them for me."

In Number 154, March 25, 1899, Harvey Morris, Company E, Fourth Texas Regiment, U. S. V., at Camp Mosby, Texas, affirmed that "nearly everybody in the army reads it."

The "forgotten" war in the Philippines was not ignored by *Tip Top's* readers. In Number 276, July 27, 1901, Howard Rowe of Baltimore suggested that "I think it would be a good plan for...readers of the *Tip Top Weekly* to forward their back numbers, after they are through reading them, to the Philippines, as our soldier boys (Many of whom are sons of Old Eli) could pass many a pleasant hour while sick or off duty...If the boys would only get together and bundle up their back numbers and address them to 'The Sick Soldier Boys, Santa Mesa Hospital, Manila, P.I.' I am sure they will feel better for having put a little pleasure in the way of those noble boys in blue who are so far away from home..."

Because of the war's abrupt ending, several writers were still at work on their stories when peace came. Although the nickel weeklies dropped the subject and moved on to the Boer War and Boxer Rebellion, several good juveniles appeared in hard covers within the next few years. Among them were Kirk Munroe's *FORWARD, MARCH* (1899), Elbridge S. Brooks's *YOUNG DEFENDER* series, Harrie Irving Hancock's *AGUINALDO'S HOSTAGE* (1901), Capt. Frederick Sadleir Brereton's *UNDER THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER* (ca. 1900), and the first two volumes of Stratemeyer's *FLAG OF FREEDOM* series, written under his "Capt. Ralph Bonehill" pseudonym. Hancock would return his characters to the Philippines several years later in early volumes of his *UNCLE SAM'S BOYS* or *BOYS OF THE ARMY* series, which soon segued into World War I. Stratemeyer was still finishing his *OLD GLORY* books when he moved into the spinoff *SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE* series about the Boxer Rebellion and the Russo-Japanese War. G. A. Henty was too busy chronicling the South African War and the relief of the legations at Peking to deal with America's first colonial foray.

And so our only "fun" war came mercifully to an end, supported to the last by the dime novel industry.

* * * * *

W A N T E D

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NEWSSTAND AND DESK

By Rocco Musemeche

Any visit to Louisville, Kentucky, should include the building on the campus of the University of Louisville which houses the Edgar Rice Burroughs Memorial Collection. In doing so be prepared to blink in amazement at an astounding vista of dust jacketed books, badges, posters and a varied array of Burroughs memorabilia.

Ringmaster in this silent abode of Tantor, Sheeta, Numa and Tarzan of the Apes is a highly personable gentleman, George T. McWhorter, curator of the collection, Editor of the *Burroughs Bulletin* and President of the Burroughs Bibliophiles. In an aside to all this, his duties in library surroundings include those associated with the Rare Book Department.

We were five descending hard on closing time, taking a break while attending the 1992 American Culture Association/Popular Culture Association Convention, five on a breakneck dash to squeeze in a look at the Shangri-La of the Burroughs world. Namely we were, Randy Cox, Al Tonik, Gordon Huber, myself and son John Musemeche.

Unable to quite properly list all the goodies we ogled or thumbed through and taken with a desire to adequately describe the contents of this super delightful haven, I asked for a listing which I turn to in affording the reader with a mere glimpse of this Burroughs memorabilia.

To begin with, the collection contains something like 30,000 items in all areas of collecting: books and periodicals on the life and times of the author himself; the pulp magazines which showcased his serialized stories (augmented with an additional collection of 10,000 pulp magazines of all genres and over 1,100 dime novels, including the first edition of the first one ever published); the complete set of the writer's books in first editions, American, English and foreign languages; the daily and Sunday Tarzan and John Carter newspaper strips, to say nothing of the comic books.

Also to be seen are fanzines dedicated exclusively to Burroughs, as well as an additional file of science fiction fanzines dating back to the 1940s; the films (silent and talkies); filmscripts, adaptations, abridgements, pastiches and imitations of the author's works; original art and prints of the major as well as amateur artists who have depicted the author's characters and themes; a representative collection of toys, games, t-shirts, coasters and manufactured items pertaining to Edgar Rice Burroughs and his creations.

In a report submitted graciously by George McWhorter he states that of particular interest to historians and those interested in author memorabilia, are his early school books, personally autographed copies of all his published books and such personal items as his clothing, shaving razor, cigarette case and monogrammed matchbook, identification cards and his personal papers from his tour of duty at the oldest war correspondent of World War II (which he was); a photograph collection of family pictures; scrapbooks and clippings of newspaper and magazine accounts on his works spanning an 80 year period; film stills many of which are signed by the actors and such items as the swimming trunks of Olympic champion and actor Johnny Weissmuller.

George McWhorter provides an interesting light on his many visitors who have specific interests such as those specializing in collecting movie memorabilia only or comic books only, or first editions only, or pulp magazines only, or art work only, or fanzines only.

Others, such as those who are researchers, visit with specific projects such as historical background on the author's early career in Idaho

or Arizona, Illinois and after his move to California in 1919. Others research on such projects encompassing the films, pulp magazines, Tarzan characters and those artists illustrating the author's works. The majority of such researchers however, are writing articles for newspapers, magazines, etc.

Important visitors include major writers and artists among whom were Burne Hogarth, the greatest living Tarzan comic strip artist, a visitor on numerous occasions. Hundreds of visitors sign the guest registers which date back to 1960.

Come to think of it, I fail to remember signing in which means going back to do so and also in providing the opportunity of taking in the 25,000 items I did not get to see.

* * * * *

STRATEMEYER AND HIS PEN-NAMES

By John T. Dizer

There is a modern tendency to attempt to "tie down" the authorship of stories and books in the field of popular literature. Researchers are often too quick to ascribe pen-names to particular authors based on dubious or at least non-proven evidence. This is particularly true with Edward Stratemeyer. There are many reasons for this. Stratemeyer wrote a large body of work before he formed the Stratemeyer Syndicate about 1904. At the start of his career he used many pen-names, some of which may have been shared with other writers. He owned or "controlled" works of Alger and apparently other writers and published these works under various pen-names. He never claimed authorship of any of these works and we have no real assurance that he was the actual author.

When the Syndicate was formed Stratemeyer hired professionals to write the books, based on Stratemeyer's characters, plots and outlines. "House names" such as Laura Lee Hope and Victor Appleton were given as the authors. It was assumed that children would be disillusioned to learn that Laura Lee Hope et al did not really exist so the actual authorship of the Syndicate books was a closely guarded secret. When the nature of the fiction factory became known and questions were asked about actual authors the answers were anything but factual. The Stratemeyer Syndicate, which has not shared researchers' eagerness to authenticate pen-names, has for years attributed all products of the early Syndicate and of the books controlled by Stratemeyer to Stratemeyer himself. Their arguments are perfectly logical and correct, in that Stratemeyer was the owner, originator, plot writer, editor and producer of the books. The fact that contract writers were involved was felt to be nobody's business but the Syndicate's. Thus Mr. Andrew Svenson, who was a partner in the Stratemeyer Syndicate, a most honorable man and a fine gentleman wrote me in 1966 that "F. W. Webster, Margaret Penrose and Alice Emerson all were pseudonyms used by Mr. Stratemeyer." Even though we know that the Garises, W. Bert Foster and Mildred Wirt were contract writers for many of the most popular Stratemeyer titles, by Mr. Svenson's understanding (and this holds true for Dumas and Balzac books as well of course) his statement was entirely true. It is no help, however, for researchers who are trying to authenticate authorship. Another point which is often overlooked is that Edward Stratemeyer did not claim most of the pen-names which are ascribed to him. In the NATIONAL CYCLOPAEDIA OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY, volume 16 (1918 edition) this statement appears: "Some of them [Stratemeyer's books] were issued under the noms-de-plume of "Capt. Ralph Bonehill" and "Arthur M. Winfield." Mr. Stratemeyer also completed a story of "Oliver Optic," under

the title of THE UNDIVIDED UNION, and various works of Horatio Alger, Jr." I quote this at length because I believe that all this information was supplied by Edward Stratemeyer himself. You may notice that there is no mention of Chapman, Rockwood, Charles, etc. A later edition of the NATIONAL CYCLOPAEDIA OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY, volume 32, 1967, refers to "all three of the author's names," (Stratemeyer, Bonehill and Winfield) but no others. Only in CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, Gale Research Co., 1968, is Stratemeyer given credit for BOUND TO RISE, (Chapman) and the two Louis Charles books. He is also credited with the James A. Cooper stories which I believe were written at least partly by Bert Foster, he is credited with the YOUNG PIONEER series (written by Rathborne, according to Johanssen and Rathborne himself) and a number of the Stratemeyer books were listed as published by McKay in 1902 when in fact they were printed by Street & Smith, reprinted by Federal and not reprinted by McKay until 1906. Rockwood is listed as a pen-name but I find no volumes listed for Rockwood. The information is voluminous, detailed and full of errors. I warn any researcher about accepting it. So we are left with only Bonehill and Winfield as fully acceptable and proven pen-names, authenticated by Stratemeyer himself. There are other quite well authenticated pen-names, particularly from the Street & Smith author lists at Syracuse University. There are many more which I personally accept but prefer to consider as "not proven" until I see more evidence.

A good place to start an examination of Stratemeyer's pen-names used for hardcover boys books is the WANAMAKER YOUNG PEOPLES' LIBRARY. This library, which in 1901 consisted of 117 books included eighteen Stratemeyer-controlled books with seven different authors listed. At that time the Merghon Company was the major publisher of those books controlled by Stratemeyer which were published under pen-names and the Wanamakers were simply Merghons with different covers and title pages. The eighteen Stratemeyer-controlled books in the WANAMAKER YOUNG PEOPLES' LIBRARY and the pen-names are as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Alger | FALLING IN WITH FORTUNE |
| 2. Alger | OUT FOR BUSINESS |
| 3. Bonehill | A SAILOR BOY WITH DEWEY |
| 4. Bonehill | WHEN SANTIAGO FELL |
| 5. Bonehill | OFF FOR HAWAII |
| 6. Bonehill | YOUNG BANDMASTER |
| 7. Chapman | BOUND TO RISE |
| 8. Charles | FORTUNE HUNTERS OF THE PHILIPPINES |
| 9. Charles | LAND OF FIRE |
| 10. D. T. Henty | MALCOLM THE WATERBOY |
| 11. Marline | LOST ON VOLCANO ISLAND |
| 12. Marline | THE LUCH OF A CASTAWAY |
| 13. Rockwood | A SCHOOLBOY'S PLUCK |
| 14. Rockwood | WIZARD OF THE SEA |
| 15. Winfield | ROVER BOYS AT SCHOOL |
| 16. Winfield | ROVER BOYS IN THE JUNGLE |
| 17. Winfield | ROVER BOYS ON THE OCEAN |
| 18. Winfield | ROVER BOYS OUT WEST |

Let us attempt to analyze these pen-names to determine actual authorship: ALGER — Mrs. Harriet Adams, Stratemeyer's daughter, told me many years ago that she had letters from Alger and Alger's sister which asked her Father to carry on Alger's unfinished work. Research by Gilbert K. Westgard II has secured one of these letters and a unique Alger manuscript [see pages 77 and 78 of this issue] started in Alger's handwriting and finished in the

typing of Edward Stratemeyer. Ignoring all of the controversy, I would note that Stratemeyer never claimed to have written these Algers but only to have "completed" or "edited" them. However he had the rights to them and certainly "controlled" them. Most Alger authorities feel the books are more Stratemeyer than Alger.

BONEHILL — No question. These books were by Stratemeyer.

CHAPMAN — This title (BOUND TO RISE) is a real question. It consists of two short novels, BOUND TO RISE, OR THE YOUNG FLORISTS OF SPRING HILL and WALTER LORING'S CAREER. The book was reprinted as BOYS OF SPRING HILL and is better known by that title. I consider YOUNG FLORISTS to be the best short novel for boys written by Stratemeyer—if he wrote it. It was first published in Stratemeyer's *Bright Days* in 1896 as by "Albert Lee Ford," also the author of an 1895 serial in *Young People of America* (Stratemeyer was editor of the magazine), later printed in hardcover as by "Arthur M. Winfield." The second half of BOUND TO RISE, WALTER LORING'S CAREER, was also published in *Bright Days* with "Allen Chapman" as the author. While both stories have many elements of Stratemeyer they do not read at all the same, with WALTER LORING'S CAREER being much the inferior. We know that Stratemeyer used Allen Chapman as a syndicate house-name in later years and it is obvious that Stratemeyer controlled both stories. However we have no real proof that Stratemeyer wrote either or both of the stories.

CHARLES — Here, again, Edward Stratemeyer never claimed to have written these books. Talking to Harriet Adams in 1975 I asked her about the name in connection with LAND OF FIRE and she stated that her father started the book, became ill, and his brother Louis Charles Stratemeyer finished it, hence the "Louis Charles." However, when I asked her about FORTUNE HUNTERS OF THE PHILIPPINES she was not able to give me any information. We now know from the Street & Smith records that Louis Charles Stratemeyer wrote several stories for Street & Smith and there is nothing to prove or disprove his connection with either of these books. Again, the authorship is "not proven" but the books were certainly controlled by Edward Stratemeyer. To further confuse the issue, when Capt. Chester G. Mayo, USN, Ret. was doing his research for the bibliography of *Bright Days* he was informed by the Stratemeyer Syndicate that Louis Charles was a pen-name for Edward Stratemeyer.

D. T. HENTY — Capt. Dartt, John Cargill Thompson and others in the Henty field all believe that this is a Stratemeyer story and that he used the Henty name to cash in on Henty's popularity. Mrs. Adams felt strongly that her father did not do this type of thing and furthermore had no need to, as popular as he was at the time. In actual fact it was quite customary to use variations of popular authors' names quite routinely in the story papers of the time. We know that in one instance Stratemeyer first used "P. T. Barnum, Jr.", then "Theodore Barnum" and finally "Capt. Ralph Bonehill" as author of the same story. However, we must remember that Stratemeyer was publisher, not just editor, of *Bright Days* where the Henty story appeared and, while he may have written a lot of the magazine we have no reason to assume he wrote it all. Stratemeyer certainly always controlled this book but that does not prove he wrote it.

MARLINE — Several years ago Peter C. Walther pointed out that the villain of THE LUCK OF A CASTAWAY was none other than Dan Baxter although apparently not the villain of the same name in THE ROVER BOYS. The suspicion is that, like Tom Swift and Ned Newton, Stratemeyer recycled those names which he liked. "Cast Away Among Pirates; or, Plucky Young Sports Afloat and Ashore," by Mark Marline, appeared in *Young Sports of America* (which shortly became *Young People of America*) in October, 1895, four years before the first ROVER BOYS. As noted above Stratemeyer was editor of the

magazine. The next month "Volcano Island; or, In the Footprints of Savages" appeared, also by Mark Marline. It is believed that these stories, although they have not been sighted by any researcher in recent years, were the basis for the two books above, copyrighted by Mershon in 1900. Judging by the content of the Guinon bibliography of *Young People of America* Stratemeyer appears to have been a busy man. Whether he wrote either or both books is unknown but he obviously controlled the books and arranged for their publication with Mershon. We might note in passing that the Marline titles are apparently not mentioned in the Stratemeyer-Chatterton-Peck-Mershon Litigation of 1907 and 1908.

ROCKWOOD — Any early Stratemeyer publication with this name is automatically attributed to Stratemeyer because of the widespread use of the name in Syndicate series. For example, A SCHOOLBOY'S PLUCK was written as by "Philip A. Alyer" and first appeared in *Young People of America* but was printed in hardcover by Mershon as by "Roy Rockwood." By comparison we might note that RIVAL BICYCLISTS was first written for the same magazine as by "Roy Rockwood" but printed in hard cover as by "Captain Ralph Bonehill." If WIZARD OF THE SEA was by Stratemeyer he couldn't have been proud of it. The last half is such a direct steal from Verne that it is very hard to swallow. Even more interesting is a comparison of "The Schoolboy Cadets" by "Roy Rockwood" with WIZARD OF THE SEA, by "Roy Rockwood." "The Schoolboy Cadets" was a serial published in Stratemeyer's *Bright Days* a year after "The Wizard of the Deep" (which became WIZARD OF THE SEA in hardcover). "The Schoolboy Cadets" follows WIZARD OF THE SEA literally word for word for many chapters with names and locales the only changes. However, "The Schoolboy Cadets" deviates abruptly from the Verne plagiarism and continues to a standard ending, consistent with the story. Stratemeyer controlled both stories. Whether he wrote both stories and made the extensive revisions to the later story, "The Schoolboy Cadets," is not known. "The Schoolboy Cadets" was never published in hardcover but is an entertaining story and certainly more consistent in style than WIZARD OF THE SEA. Other than the Rockwood name we have no real proof that Stratemeyer wrote WIZARD OF THE SEA or "The Schoolboy Cadets," for that matter. WINFIELD — No question. These books were by Stratemeyer.

There is a most interesting possibility which I have discussed with other Stratemeyer researchers and that is that while Stratemeyer was editor and publisher/editor of various juvenile magazines from 1893 on, he would have been in the market for manuscripts for which there might later be a market. He may have bought stories and rewritten them for future sale. When he was publisher of *Bright Days* he obviously needed material. As a good businessman he could assign any pen-name he wished and we must remember he never claimed Alger, Chapman, Charles, Marline, and Rockwood as his own pen-names.

Another possibility is this: As busy as Stratemeyer was, he could have been outlining books and hiring writers to complete them on an informal basis long before the formal organization of the Stratemeyer Syndicate. I have seen dates of 1904, 1906, 1908 and 1910 given for the founding of the Stratemeyer Syndicate. Nancy Axelrad, former Syndicate partner, in answer to my comments suggesting an early founding reported several years back, "Recently I discovered some 1905 correspondence from one of Stratemeyer's publishers who refer to 'the syndicate' in a way that leads me to believe it was formed either in late 1904 or January, 1905." I believe that Howard R. Garis was working with Stratemeyer at least by 1904 and that the BOBBSEY TWINS, published in 1904 by Mershon, is his.

This is all speculation at this point and is of importance mainly to researchers in the field. I submit, however, there are far-reaching

125. B. *Out*

whole satisfied with his position, ~~although~~ it must be confessed that he was looking around for something better.

"I am sure Mr. Marden wouldn't want me to remain here if I could improve myself," he thought. "In fact, I think he would like me the better for striking out for myself."

"It's a terribly dull life--this in a stuffy office," said Livingston Palmer one day. Since his upsetting with the variety singer the senior clerk had hardly known what to do with himself.

"That's true," answered Robert. "But it's much better than doing nothing."

"That's true."

"When I struck out from home I was at first afraid I would be left stranded."

"Humph! that wouldn't happen to me," said Palmer, loftily. "I am certain I could strike something at once, if I tried."

Robert did not agree with his fellow clerk, since he had seen many a poor fellow on the streets begging for work of any kind. But he saw it would be useless to attempt to argue Palmer out of his high opinion of himself.

On the day following there came a long letter for Robert. It was postmarked Timberville, Michigan, and was from Dick Marden.

"My dear Robert," wrote the miner. "I've been wanting to drop you a few lines for some time, but could not get around to do it. When I arrived here I found my uncle, Felix Amberton, very ill, and I have had to take practically entire charge of his affairs. My uncle is a bachelor like myself, so he hadn't even a wife to depend upon in this emergency,"

"My uncle owns a large lumber interest here, close to the upper end of the state, and several Canadian are trying to force him into a sale of his lands at a cheap price. They claim to have some hold upon Mr. Amberton, although what that hold is I cannot find out, although I am ~~able to say~~ mighty hard to win the secret from them."

"I must say I wish you were up here with me,--to help run the lumber office. I have to be out on the lands a greater part of the time, and the office clerk ~~a fellow by the name of Lemuel Preston~~ is not to be trusted, since he is a great friend of the Canadians I mentioned. I am in hopes that my uncle will soon recover, to take charge for himself."

Dick Marden's letter interested Robert greatly. The confinement of city life was beginning to tell on the boy, who had heretofore lived more or less in the open at home.

"I'd like to go to Timberville," he said to Palmer, when he showed the communication. "The smell of pine and spruce would do a fellow a world of good."

First Stratemeyer-typed page in manuscript/typescript of OUT FOR BUSINESS.

Only the first 38% of the Horatio Alger, Jr., novel OUT FOR BUSINESS is really by Alger, while the remainder is by Edward Stratemeyer. The switch in authors occurs on page 113, line 18, in the printed editions. The two manuscript/typescript pages shown correspond to page 112, line 21, to page 115, line 20.

Copies of the entire manuscript/typescript of OUT FOR BUSINESS may be had for \$25 from G. Westgard, 1001 SW 5th Ct., Boynton Beach, FL 33426.

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		G., spine slightly rolled	\$3.00
		F., mended at spine	\$2.00
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		F., mended at spine, left upper corner torn away	\$2.00
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		F., mended at spine	\$2.00
#286	Dead for 5 Years; or, The Mystery of a Madhouse.	F., cover reinforced	\$2.00
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#287	Broker Bob; or, The Youngest Operator in Wall Street.	F., brittle	\$2.00
#289	The Twenty Doctors; or, The Mystery of the Coast.	F.	\$3.00